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AN EPITAPH

When at his hour Death came to take me
I did not fear his voice and rave:
Since Life himself had failed to break me
I laughed with Death above my grave,
Shook hands with Death above my grave,
And never prayed a god should wake me.

I begged no god to scant his measure:
I wrestled Life for all I have:
I sought for no immortal treasure
To bribe my way beyond the grave
But sang and battled by the grave,
Wherein men lie and take their pleasure.

I took no ease in wild and clearing,
Desert or forest, plain or wave:
Beyond all sight and out of hearing
Of any prayers I dug my grave:
I smiled at Death beside my grave,
And laid me down at last, unfearing.

I laid me down, in peace reclining,
Without the laurels many crave:
My memories, like soft jewels shining,
Lay at my heart and lit my grave;
They lit and warmed my happy grave:
I laid me down without repining.

MORLEY ROBERTS.

London, England.